

Wayne Allard

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SENATOR ALLARD SECURES MORE MONEY FOR COLORADO COUNTIES

Senate approves \$35 million increase in PILT funding in 2006

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee secured a substantive increase in funding for the Department of Interior's Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program in the 2006 Interior Appropriations bill approved by the Senate on Wednesday evening, obtaining \$35 million more than had previously been budgeted for the program.

"We won \$35 million above and beyond the amount asked for by the President in his FY 2006 budget request," said Senator Allard, who also sits on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. "This is \$8.2 million more than was provided for PILT in 2005."

"This was a very tight budget year, and there were many competing programs, but we still managed to increase this critical funding for local governments," Senator Allard said.

The PILT program provides federal payments to local governments to help offset the property tax revenue they are unable to collect because there are nontaxable federal lands within their boundaries. These payments help local governments provide services such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations. The FY 2006 bill contains \$235 million for the program nationwide next year.

"The PILT program is vital to the health of local governments in Colorado, particularly in rural counties, and you can be sure I will continue to support this program in the future," Senator Allard said.

PILT payments are made annually for tax-exempt federal lands administered by the BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations.

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